

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5689
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y T E X T
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, GR, TU, US
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION TO CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON EMBARGO ISSUE

REF: STATE 112288

1. THE MAY 2 SFRC HEARING ON THE LIFTING OF THE ARMS
EMBARGO ON TURKEY WAS A PROMINENT NEWS ITEM IN THE GREEK
PRESS TODAY. HOWEVER, THE INFORMATION ARRIVED IN ATHENS
TOO LATE TO PERMIT MORE THAN CURSORY COVERAGE BASED LARGELY
ON WIRE SERVICE REPORTS WHICH FOCUSED ON CLARK CLIFFORD'S
STATEMENT. HEADLINES STRESSED WHAT IS PERCEIVED LOCALLY
AS A PRO-TURKISH BIAS IN THE TESTIMONY OF THOSE WHO
APPEARED, WHILE NOTING THAT SOME SENATORS HAD EXPRESSED
SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT LIFTING THE EMBARGO.

2. HEADLINES RANGED FROM CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVERNMENT
KATHIMERINI'S "BEHIND THE SCENE ACTIVITIES CONCERNING THE
EMBARGO - CRITICAL VOTE TODAY", TO LEFTIST ELEFTHEROTYPIA'S
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"PRO-TURKISM AMUCK IN SENATE YESTERDAY - CLIFFORD,
CHRISTOPHER, AND BROWN SEEK LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO".
LIBERAL, OPPOSITION TO VIMA, UNDER THE HEADLINE "DOUBT
ABOUT CARTER PROPOSAL: PRO-TURKISH VOICE OF 'MEDIATOR'
CLIFFORD IN SENATE", REPORTED THAT CLIFFORD BASED HIS
RECOMMENDATION IN FAVOR OF LIFTING THE EMBARGO ON
THREE POINTS: U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS, THE

THREAT TO NATO'S FUTURE, AND THE FACT THAT GREEK FORCES HAD ALSO USED U.S. ARMS ON CYPRUS IN 1974. THE ARTICLE ALSO COMMENTED THAT CLIFFORD'S "PRO-TURKISH" ASSESSMENT OF THE ISSUE EXCLUDED HIM FROM ANY FUTURE MEDIATING MISSIONS TO GREECE OR CYPRUS. PRO-GOVERNMENT AKROPOLIS REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD PERSUADED SOME DEMOCRATIC SENATORS TO SWITCH THEIR ORIGINAL POSITIONS FAVORING THE EMBARGO, BUT THAT THESE CHANGES HAD BEEN NULLIFIED BY SIX REPUBLICAN SENATORS REVERSING THEIR INITIAL POSITIONS. MOSCOW-ORIENTED RIZOSPASTIS NOTED SECRETARY BROWN HAD SAID ELECTRONIC SITES IN TURKEY WERE IMPORTANT FOR FOLLOWING MILITARY ACTIVITY IN RUSSIA. SEVERAL STORIES ALSO UNDERLINED THAT THE VOTE IN THE HIRC WOULD OCCUR TODAY, WOULD BE VERY CLOSE BUT WOULD PROBABLY BE APPROVED IN COMMITTEE.

3. MORNING NEWS BROADCASTS FEATURED DETAILED COVERAGE OF THE SFRC PROCEEDINGS, INCLUDING EXCERPTS OF THE TESTIMONY AND OF THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. LATER BROADCASTS HAVE PREDICTED A CRITICAL VOTE WHEN THE HIRC VOTES TODAY.

4. THERE HAS BEEN NO EDITORIAL COMMENT SO FAR.
MCCLOSKEY

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